

Education Issue



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Violence is everyone's problem

By Steve Bonspiel

The Cree School Board has announced a partnership with the Northern Quebec Teacher's Association aimed at combating violence in Cree schools. That's the good news. The bad news is there is still a long way to go.

Every day in Eeyou Istchee a number of kids go to school hungry, under-stimulated and, in certain cases, reeling from the toll their abusive home life has taken on their minds and bodies. It is not surprising that when they get to school, they take it out on others. It's the classic cycle of a frustrated victim turning on a smaller, more helpless prey. It has to be stopped.

Thousand of dollars are spent each year in the nine communities to clean up spray paint, fix broken windows and repair holes in the walls.

"If a student breaks a window, that's money spent on repairs as opposed to other things it could be spent on," Judith Michel, Director of Education Services at the CSB told *the Nation*. "If they don't pay, what are we going to do, not repair the school? It's hard to make the parents accountable."

People like Judith Michel have many solid ideas. After teaching Cree kids in various forms for 16 years, she has been working at the grassroots level long enough to be able to pinpoint the problems students and teachers face. The Cree School Board is starting to pay attention to people like her when they speak out.

The initiative to combat violence in Cree schools is looking to the Elders and their teachings to break the cycle of violence. The CSB is also working on posters and a logo from each community to serve as a permanent symbol against violence.

It has been a long time coming, but at least it is a good start.

Some people ask, "Why is violence and disrespect so rampant in our schools?"

Kids are inherently curious, always willing to push the envelope to see what works for them and what gets them into trouble. But when that same child never receives a reprimand at home, then you get what we are faced with today. Kids with no respect for others and parents who do not take the time to discipline their kids.

That's not to say that all parents or children in Eeyou Istchee are bad – far from it. A large number of parents are bringing their children up to respect themselves and others. They are also instilling in them the importance of a good education.

It's not the good kids from good homes who are out on the street at three in the morning smoking weed at 10 years old.

There are a growing number of bad situations that, if not fixed by a certain age, ensure the young ones will be faced with a much more challenging life growing up.

Statistics Canada recently announced that the Aboriginal population is over one million people and that our birth rate is more than three times the rate of the country as a whole. They also said that more than half of us are less than 25 years old.

We owe our children a fighting chance at a better education. Making sure students are provided with the ability to learn from a young age and not saddled with emotional baggage to weigh them down is a step in the right direction and extremely important for our growth and survival as Aboriginal people.

The children are our future. They are the ones who will carry on our name, our legacy and our heritage. When will we start treating them all that way?

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on the cover:

Teachers who participated in the communication training workshop at the Montreal Fluency Centre

cover photo courtesy of:

Nydia Nebelsky,
Coordinator of Special Education Services

Job hunting

One thing I notice is that the local papers have many job openings posted in the classifieds. I checked out our backyard for job openings and there are few to speak of. Fifteen posted at CHRD, a few in *the Nation*, eight found online with the feds, a whole slew for CCDC, many postings on bulletin boards at the clinics, quite a lot more at local band levels.

So, what gives? If you add up all the jobs held by non-natives or transients, the job availability shoots way up. There really isn't a job shortage, there's just a shortage of people who can do the jobs at hand, I surmise.

What's the big deal, you may wonder. We have our own school boards and trade schools and enough resources to carry out any master plan (if there is one that is) over the long term. But do we really know what people want to be when they grow up?

Perhaps it has nothing to do with reality, and that's why so many dream jobs fade away with the dream. In the dream you're doing your job but in the real world, are you working toward that dream job?

Probably not, so that is why I dreamed up a list of the top 10 reasons why you should get an education to get that dream job. This comes from two perspectives: one from a student like you and one from a wise old sage like me.

A student's top 10 reasons to stay in school:

10. I don't know.
9. I don't care; I just want that car/skidoo/ATV my parents promised me when I graduate.
8. Because my boyfriend or girlfriend (or both) is going there.
7. Because my ex-boyfriend or ex-girlfriend (or both) isn't there.
6. Because it's like an all-expense paid trip to a cheap foreign country.



by
Sonny Orr

5. Because with my social science degree, I can hang out and socialize and still get paid to do it without ever having to work.
4. Because I'll stay in school until someone offers me a high-paying job that sounds a bit like my educational background.
3. Because I can't do the job I applied for and got; now I have to go back to school to keep it.
2. Because I want to make more money.
1. Because I want to and need to.

My top ten reasons:

10. One day you will work for me.
9. One day I might have to fire you because you don't know what you are doing, so I'm warning you now, stay in school and learn as much as possible.
8. One day you might have my job, so you better learn how to be a professional.
7. I pay well to those who deserve to be paid well, and vice-versa.
6. So I know that that new car/skidoo/ATV was worth every penny.
5. Because I need to know whether I'm hiring some yahoo or making a good choice when you get hired.
4. Because I want to see our people succeed.
3. Because I want you to make more money, because you're getting too expensive to keep, so I can keep my money to myself.
2. Because back in '75, that's what we said we were going to do, so you're going to do it now whether you like it or not!
And my number-one reason for you to stay in school:
1. Well, okay then, quit school, come back home and help pay the bills, clean up the house, and watch the kids while I spend my hard-earned money on a well-earned night out!

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Violence in Cree schools

School board launches campaign to confront problem

By Steve Bonspiel

The Cree School Board is not going to take the growing problem of youth violence lying down. In partnership with the Northern Quebec Teacher's Association, the CSB will kick off a one-day violence-themed awareness campaign February 15.

"There is a lot of vandalism and violence in the schools," said Judith Michel, Director of Education Services for the CSB. "I think part of the solution is getting the Cree School Board and the teacher's union to join forces to make sure everyone is on board in sending this strong message to the communities."

Michel has worked in various capacities in Eeyou Istchee for the past 16 years, including as vice-principal, principal and consultant in Waswanipi, Nemaska and Chisasibi.

She talked about getting together with other entities, such as the band council and Grand Council to help with curbing the problem. "If we bring everyone together it will be more helpful for each community."

Broken windows and broken spirits go hand in hand in some of the communities as children are either suspended into submission, never to return to school or they are bullied into quitting.

On February 15, Elders will be brought in to teach the kids about respect and the importance of good communication to stop the escalating amounts of violence in the schools.

A similar event will be held at the beginning of the school year to remind the students how they should behave towards each other. The two days of awareness and other related activities throughout the year that will demonstrate the ugliness of violence is just a start.

One of the big things that has to be worked on is making the kids realize there are consequences for their blatant disregard for school property.

"If a student breaks a window, that's money spent on repairs as opposed to other things it could be spent on," she said. "If they don't pay, what are we going to do? Not repair the school? It's hard to make the parents accountable. Some schools make the students do the repairs or mop the floor or whatever, but the parents are another story."

As a result of the vandalism, many after-school programs and events cannot be held because so much money is going towards repairs.

Michel believes initiatives like these will help to get the message across if everyone sticks to the plan. "It's like anything else, it goes with repetition," she said. "The more you repeat to them the philosophy of respecting yourself and respecting others, the more it will help. If you stop the bullying some of the students face each day, they might stay in school longer and have a better success rate. It's not easy, but we have to do something. It's getting out of hand."

IF YOU STOP THE BULLYING SOME OF THE STUDENTS FACE EACH DAY, THEY MIGHT STAY IN SCHOOL LONGER AND HAVE A BETTER SUCCESS RATE. IT'S NOT EASY, BUT WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING. IT'S GETTING OUT OF HAND.

Michel said that when a student is repeatedly suspended it reaches a point where the principal does not know what to do and "for some that's the only attention they are going to get."

One solution, Michel said, is to make violence a topic within the curriculum.

"In language arts, the topic could be vandalism and respect," she said. "It could be a topic in math even. If we break so many windows and this is how much it costs. It can be done in so many subjects. The principal needs to remind the teachers to talk about respect in their classes."

Northern Quebec Teacher's Association President Patrick D'Astous agrees. He has a five-year-old boy attending school in Montreal and he has already dealt with bullies.

The new measures "will affect the teachers in a way to produce an environment where people can work well," he said. "It brings serenity to the classroom, knowing that something concrete is being done about violence in the schools."

Last September, the Centrale des Syndicats du Québec (CSQ) and the Centre de recherche et d'intervention sur la réussite scolaire (CRIRES) published a booklet that lays out how to properly deal with violence. The CSB will be using this tool to educate students, teachers and parents.

"It affects the whole classroom when a kid is bullying another kid or threatening a teacher," said D'Astous. "The students can't concentrate. It will help to create an environment that is free from that for everyone."

D'Astous said one of the problems is what kids see on TV. Rappers with guns treating women like dirt are not reality, he warned, and those kids who emulate their actions are bound to get into trouble.

The situation in some homes – various forms of abuse at the hands of their own parents – also has to change.

"We can work inside the schools to prevent violence, but if the community doesn't share our goals and unite behind us to fight violence everywhere in the community, it will be hard to make big progress."



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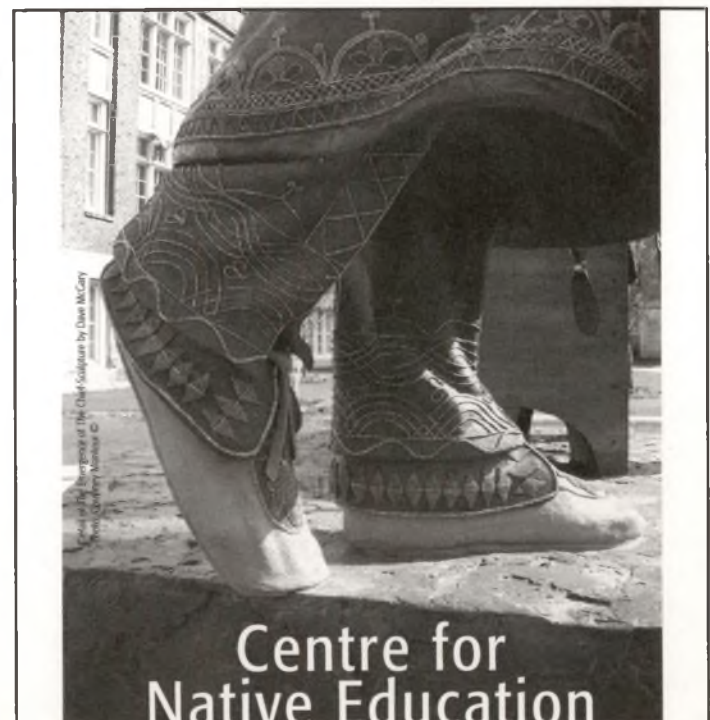
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Wemindji leads country in fight against diabetes

By Steve Bonspiel

If they gave an award out for kicking butt for a great cause, Wemindji would win it hands down.

The Cree communities of Wemindji, Waskaganish, Eastmain and Chisasibi have risen to the top in the uphill battle against diabetes by selling paper reindeer and sleighs to raise almost \$35,000.

Wemindji stands on top, having sold 8,767 reindeer at a toonie each and 919 sleighs at \$10 each, outpacing the large cities of Winnipeg, Regina and Greater Chisasibi.



Top row: (l-r) Priscilla Hughboy, Ruthie Sealhunter, Doreen Shashaweskum Bottom row: (l-r) Beverly Mayappo, Loretta Shanush, Marcella Georgekish

Since Northern Stores started selling the paper fundraisers years ago, the Cree numbers have continued to climb and have become more and more impressive each year.

The manager of the Wemindji Northern Store, Doreen Shashaweskum, confessed she had a few tricks up her sleeves this year, such as holding certain events within the community and then using the money raised to purchase \$10 sleighs to fight diabetes, but she would not say what those events were.

"It's a secret," she said. "We don't want the other communities to know how we do it."

Wemindji's number of 400 snowmen sold from their first real year of selling in 2003 has climbed steadily each year with totals of 3,209, 5,219, 5,406, 8,108 and 8,767. They are aiming for 10,000 in the next few years.

For a small community of less than 2,000 people, Wemindji's success is a story directly related to the prevail-

IT'S MOSTLY MY STAFF WHO WAS SELLING THEM, I GIVE THEM THE CREDIT. I WAS AMAZED THAT WE BEAT OUR TOTALS FROM LAST YEAR.

ing conditions in the Cree Nation. Diabetes is rampant amongst Crees and the numbers are climbing each year. These reindeer and Santa's sleighs are seen as ways to combat the disease and raise more awareness through healthier eating habits and a combination of a better overall diet and exercise.

"It went very well, we sold more than last year and I feel pretty good," said Shashaweskum, who is in her first year as manager. She has been at the store for 26 years. "It's mostly my staff who was selling them, I give them the credit. I was amazed that we beat our totals from last year."

Shashaweskum and four of her family members stepped up to the plate and purchased 50 snowmen for \$100. She also implemented a plan whereby every time a community member would ask how far ahead they were in sales, she would fib a little and say, "We're in second, you have to keep buying." The ruse worked perfectly.

The competition between Chisasibi and Wemindji has been very healthy for the campaign over the years. Chisasibi's numbers have also steadily impressed, from 7,722 snowmen in 2004 to a dip in sales to 4,479 to an explosion of 9,503 reindeer in 2006.

Shashaweskum said that although there was no direct competition between her store and Chisasibi this time around, that did not mean her employees took the task of fighting the disease any less seriously.

Although Chisasibi only sold 3,569 reindeer in 2007, they are still very much a large part of the overall Canadian sales that has reached its second-highest peak of over 46,000 reindeer sold, 2183 sleighs and a new fund raising high of \$114,826.

To add to that impressive total, Wemindji also contributed an additional \$1,340—all of the proceeds from their "photos with Santa" promotion.

Shashaweskum said that this year's totals are impressive but she is hoping to improve each year with the community's increasing help and a larger awareness of the campaign. "We will get better and better every year. The community is behind us 100 per cent."

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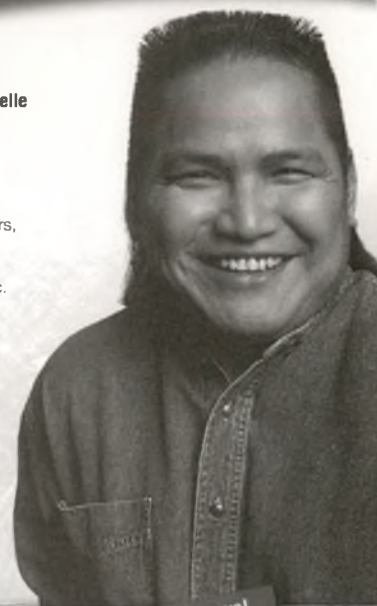
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Survivor compensation: churches get off easy

For those who attended residential schools run by the Catholic Church and have been waiting on the final 30 per cent of their settlement cheques, the wait is now over as the church has settled with the federal government instead of making individual reparation cheques to survivors.

As survivors began filing their claims last September, many were surprised when cheques for 70 per cent of the funds owed to them arrived with letters stipulating that the Catholic Church would be sending cheques covering the balance. Victims who had attended residential schools of other denominations, however, were receiving full compensation cheques without delay.

Though the multibillion-dollar compensation deal between the remaining 80,000 survivors and the government went into effect last September, the Catholic Church did not agree to the deal to pay out the balance and remained in negotiation with the federal government.

The Catholic Church was liable for a fee of \$54 million but they have instead made a deal to pay \$25 million into a healing and reconciliation fund, to open the church's archives, and provide counselling and other services to survivors.

Each denomination was responsible for paying out compensation funds to the survivors, including \$2.1 million from the Presbyterian Church and \$25 million from the Anglican Church. The Anglicans are now angling for a similar deal received by the Catholic Church.

Canada's Natives rapidly multiplying

Statistics Canada says the country's Aboriginal population has surged past one million, though there may be far more not accounted for.

According to 2006 census data released January 15, the population of those who identify themselves as Inuit, Metis or First Nations had reached 1,172,790. These new numbers indicate a spike of 45 per cent from a decade earlier, meaning that Aboriginal numbers are growing almost six times faster than the general population. At 53 per cent, Quebec's Aboriginal population is growing nine times faster than the general population.

Even more surprising, Canada's Métis nearly doubled their numbers between 1996 and 2006, up 91 per cent to 389,785 people. Part of these numbers may be attributed to more people identifying as Métis.

The median age of Aboriginals is also significantly lower, at 27, than the median 40 years among non-Aboriginals across Canada. Quebec Aboriginals have a median age of 30, compared to 41 among non-Aboriginals. Due to a very high birth rate, nearly half of Canada's Aboriginal population is under 25.

Despite these large numbers, Statscan estimates that there are still thousands of Aboriginals who haven't been accounted

for, including groups that refused to participate, others whose census polls were interrupted and communities where enumeration was not allowed. In Quebec seven Aboriginal communities refused the census poll, including the Mohawks of Kanesatake, Kahnawake and Akwesasne.

The Statistics Canada census poll also does not take into account those in prisons or the thousands of homeless Aboriginals across the country.

Cree School Board celebrates 30 years

The Cree School Board is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year and they are doing it in style. The board has commissioned a one-hour video commemorating the momentous occasion that will take viewers through the early beginnings of the CSB right up until present day.

The Cree School Board is a unique education system borne out of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement in 1975. It marked the first time a Native group took control of its educational destiny in what was then a not-so-friendly climate.

After major overhauls, including one that stemmed from the Mianscum report many years ago, the CSB is currently undergoing another reform to keep the curriculum current and to improve lagging graduation rates.

The video will be produced by Mushkeg Media Inc., a Cree-owned company. Co-Directors Paul Rickard and Tracey Deer will be researching and shooting the film in the coming months.

The History of the Cree School Board will have its premiere in Mistissini May 28 during the CSB's 30th anniversary celebrations.

For more information reach Kenny Loon, Project Coordinator at 613-325-8149 or by email at kennl@rogers.com, or Paul Rickard at 514-279-3507 or by email at mushkeg@videotron.ca.

Native Women's Shelter election results

The Annual General Meeting for the Native Women's Shelter of Montréal took place at the Maritime Plaza Hotel January 18, organized by Executive Director Nakuset. Board elections were held, with the following results:

Alana-Dawn Phillips - President
Dana-Marie Williams - Vice President
Janine Metallic - Treasurer
Darlene Wapachee - Secretary
Kaha:wi Jacobs - Board member
Stephanie Tetreault - Board member

Jobs! Jobs! Jobs!

There are many opportunities for high-paying, skilled employment

By Amy German

There has been incessant talk in the media recently of how to implement Canada's aboriginal population into the economy as the baby boomer generation has started to retire, leaving massive gaps in the country's workforce that Canada does not have the human resources to fill.

Several government officials have also discussed the need to develop the aboriginal workforce. But with almost half of aboriginal adults lacking high school diplomas, it's a difficult process.

According to Michael Petawabano, Territorial Programs for Cree Human Resources Development Co-ordinator, there is work available in just about every sector but, "We are seeing a lot of people that are coming to us that are lacking the essential skills to be able to access some of these jobs."

According to CHRDR, one of the hottest employment sectors in the north right now is construction and all related trades, from electricians to plumbers.

"These are not exact figures but I think in the Cree Nation you are looking at 200 homes being built on an annual basis," said Petawabano. He says there is a dire need for workers in this sector: "There is a deficit of about 1,500 homes within the Cree Nation."

However, remedying the manpower issue in the construction field is a complex issue as many individuals will take vocational programs but not complete the required apprenticeships. They may be experienced in the field but are not certified.

"The problem we see right now is that we are not certifying enough people. Even though they are getting the experience, they are not certified so we are not really advancing. Counting on outside companies to come in and hire our people means we are not being independent. We could set up our own companies. Now, even if we do start up our own companies, we usually have to do a joint venture because we don't have that certification [to build buildings that are up to code]," said Petawabano.

When it comes to getting certified in certain trade domains, apprenticeships are necessary.

"The people in trades need to know that there is somewhere they can go to do their apprenticeship. And I think it's because people don't understand that the person who was taking the course as a carpenter has attained 1,300 hours, they think that the person is a carpenter already. But no: this person has to practice his trade under somebody who is a certified carpenter and they have to do, if I am not mistaken, up to 6,000 hours and then go and write an examination after that," said Petawabano.

Most of the time students who graduate from vocational programs in the communities will not finish their apprenticeships because they would have to leave the communities. With apprenticeships in certain trade fields requiring years of working beneath a master in the field, individuals could be displaced for very long periods of time.

Petawabano also cited a need within the leadership of the communities to start awarding contracts to the kinds of compa-

nies who could locally provide these kinds of apprenticeships as a means of filling the employment gap in the long term.

"Once people start getting that certification they could start up their own little businesses and that is long-term employment and they will hold on to those jobs," said Petawabano.

Other fields needing manpower

Construction is not the only domain that is begging for skilled workers. "Mining is big right now here in the north," Petawabano said. All mining-related employment fields are experiencing a strong demand. Fortunately, a program will be opening up later on in 2008 at the Waswanipi School.

Nursing is one field of study that is always in tremendous demand in the north but can not be studied within the communities as with various other medical technical programs. With the projected construction of a new hospital in Mistissini, many new positions will be opening up. The question is whether the Cree workforce will be able to fill the positions.

"In Mistissini, do we even have any Cree nurses?" asked Petawabano. "I don't think so. Do we even have any in the Cree Nation? There is probably a small number right? These are jobs that our people could be holding on to. I think we have one Cree doctor but that is all we have. Don't you think that we could have one in each community at least?"

Tourism was another area that is dominated by people from outside of the communities. "I think that we need more people to take that initiative to say hey, how can I benefit from this and start my own outfitting camp or outfitting agency, taking people out on excursions and things like that," said Petawabano.

"Another one that I see is in a major need is in telecom. Let's look at technology: we are all advancing in technology and I see the Cree world counting on technicians from the outside world now," said Petawabano. Again, there were not enough certified individuals within the community to fill the need.

Within these work fields there will also be a great need for administrative workers and support staff. Petawabano said there is also a demand in law, a great demand for teachers, a need for entrepreneurs and even a need for people to run new recycling initiatives within the communities.

Should anyone be looking to go into any variety of post-secondary education, either within or outside of the Cree communities, CHRDR has funding available for any Cree and there is usually funding available from individual communities. CHRDR individually funds all of the students who attend the vocational centre in Waswanipi, particularly those who have no other means of supporting themselves while they are studying. Those who are interested should contact both their local Continuing Education office and CHRDR. For more information, go to www.chrdr.ca.

Plugging the employment gaps

What course of study will fill jobs and lead to lasting careers?

By Amy German

Between "think tanks" and economic conferences, the buzz in the communities these days is about getting more community members into the workplace to address the community's employment needs. There is a tremendous amount of work available for skilled workers that will frequently be contracted out to those from outside the community.

On the other hand, there are many individuals who are either contemplating their first careers or where to retrain for a new one but who don't know which employment fields will guarantee them a lifetime of work.

Then there are a series of Cree entities and agencies who want to assess the community's employment needs in order to avoid a glut of unnecessary workers trained in a particular skill, or, conversely, face employee shortages. Talks have already begun to see who can provide what.

In early December, The Nation spoke with Rodney Hester, the business development coordinator of the Cree Regional Economic Enterprises Council.

"We do want to participate at the career fairs in Mistissini, they are going to be holding the second annual job fair or career fair and that is going to be here, in Mistissini in July," said Hester. "Now, hopefully we can use that kind of setting to interview the young people, the students and maybe have a draw or whatever to get so many questionnaires completed and then use that information to be able to see where the interests are."

After a three-day brainstorming session between Cree government, economic entities and other interested parties January 16-18, Hester is feeling positive but he acknowledges there is still a great deal of work to be done. Participants focused on the local economy during a day-long session January 17 and Hester said the consensus was to build up the private sector within the communities.

"We support the private sector entrepreneurs in terms of developing their businesses, creating employment and helping them through the initial stages so that they become stabilized," said Hester.

Where to train for a rewarding career

Those shopping around for a new career can check out the trades training at the Sabtuan Regional Vocational Training Centre in Waswanipi. At the moment Sabtuan is offering courses in Carpentry, Professional Cooking, Secretarial Studies, Hairdressing, Assistance to Patients, Heavy Equipment, Mechanics, Computer Support, Plumbing and Heating and Northern Building Maintenance.

Some of the programs are already in session and new courses won't be opening up over the next six months. But Sabtuan Director Willie Ottereyes says there are still spots available in some programs.

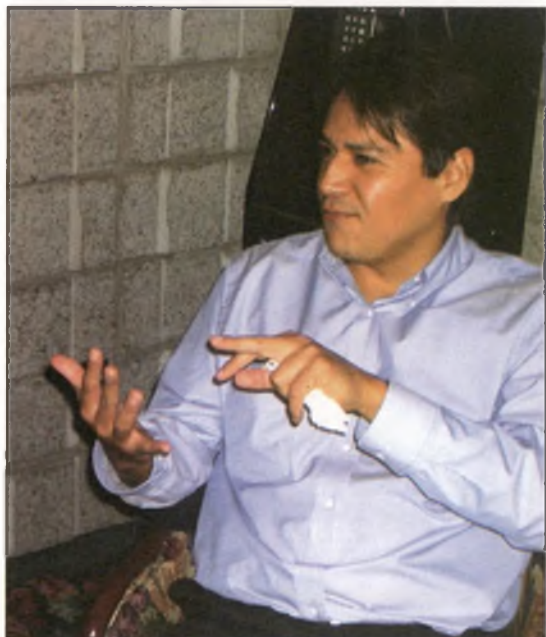
"There will be a carpentry course that will be starting up for the second week of February and if people are interested they can still apply," said Ottereyes. The Assistance to Patients course will also be starting up soon and so will the Hairdressing course.



Charles Matoush and Nian Matoush



Michael Petawabano



Rodney Hester



CREE SCHOOL BOARD
Post Secondary and Adult Secondary Level
Off-Community Programs

IMPORTANT APPLICATION DEADLINES!

Notice

Financial/Educational assistance application deadlines are:

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October 1st for programs starting in **January**, and,
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Mail in your completed application to the Montreal office
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Jane L. Blacksmith,
Administrative Technician
Cree School Board
Post Secondary Student Services
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Montreal, QC
H3H 1E7

Important Note: Incomplete applications and applications
post marked after the deadlines are not accepted.

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What a lot of people don't consider is how going to the regional vocation school can be a springboard to get into other programs. Because many of the students who arrive at the school do so without the kinds of credits required to go on to a collegial program such as nursing, starting out at the vocational centre might just be the ticket to be accepted elsewhere.

"People frequently ask about nursing programs but we tell them that we are not allowed to teach any college level programs, only vocational. So these programs that we offer, the assisting to nurses and nurse's aide and home-care assistants will benefit them if they decide to go out to college and take a nursing program or something like that. It is a good idea if they decide to go to Waswanipi first and find out how the program is. If they decide to go on later, it will give them more knowledge when they go into college to upgrade more of their skills to become a registered nurse," said Ottereyes.

In 2008 the school will also be offering three new programs. To address worker shortages in the Northern Quebec's booming mining industry, Sabtuan will be offering an Ore Extraction Program.

There are definite advantages to studying at Sabtuan, says Ottereyes, particularly because the school takes great care of their students. "We do have a residence for them and provide meals three times a day so they don't have to spend any money on that," says Ottereyes.

For those who would rather go to or stay in Mistissini while training for a new career, Sabtuan Continuing Education will

also be launching a new Protection and Development of Wildlife Habitats program at Mistissini. Though there is not yet an official start time for the new program, it will last 1,320 hours and is geared toward those who like the great outdoors.

For people looking to upgrade their skills in order to go on to a post secondary program, but can't seem to find the time to get themselves into a classroom, there is good news. A new online course entitled Preparatory to Post-Secondary Education or Vocational Programs will be available this year.

For more information on the new programs call Charles Matoush, Director of Continuing Education, at (418) 923-2764, ext 327.

To find out more or to apply to the Sabtuan Regional Vocational Training Center in Waswanipi, call 1-866-921-4040 toll free or visit www.waswanipi.com/

If, on the other hand you were considering doing courses at a university level, the **Université du Québec à Abitibi-Témiscamingue** will also be offering three new English programs geared towards First Nations individuals. Starting in September, UQAT will offer a Certificate in Administration, a Multidisciplinary Business Certificate and a Bachelors of Social Work. These programs are in addition to the Certificate in Human Resources Management, Certificate in Accounting, Certificate in Human Resources Management and Bachelor Degree in Preschool Education and Primary Teaching that the university already offers.

<http://www.uqat.quebec.ca/Firstnations/offeredprograms.asp>

NATIVE STUDIES

What's right for you?

By Amy German

If you have ever dreamed of investing time and effort in your own culture by taking university level courses in Aboriginal studies, there are a wide variety of programs both in Quebec and across Canada. The only problem comes in determining which one is right for you.

In Quebec there is one institution that offers a certificate program for Aboriginal Studies and the program is available only in French at **Université Laval** in Quebec City. The Certificat en études autochtones studies North America's indigenous peoples and is offered through Laval's anthropology department. For more info: www.ant.ulaval.ca

Concordia University also offers a cluster of courses in Aboriginal Studies. However, they are mere elective courses and they do not lead to a certificate. But they are ideal if you would simply like to pick up a few things while earning that BA, and they are offered in English. To find out more: <http://artsand-science.concordia.ca>

If you are looking to obtain a Bachelors degree and more in Native Studies but you don't want to go half way across the country to do so, the best bet is **Laurentian University** in Sudbury. Laurentian offers programs leading to a 3-year general

BA and a 4-year specialized BA. Many of the courses are available online for those who prefer to study from home. www.usudbury.com/EN/Departments/Native_Studies/Native_Studies.html

Moving into the Prairies, the **University of Saskatchewan** also offers a Native Studies BA and honours are also available in this program. The program offers an international perspective on indigenous peoples as well of local and national perspectives. www.usask.ca/nativestudies/

If you are looking to go for a more all-encompassing approach to obtaining a BA in Aboriginal Studies, look no further than **First Nations University of Canada** in Saskatchewan. Not only are there a wide variety of programs geared specifically towards First Nations at this university, there are also several courses in the Cree language, including an honours program. www.firstnationsuniversity.ca

Out west, the **University of Lethbridge** in Alberta also offers a Native American Studies BA program that not only focuses on Canada's aboriginal people across North America from a Native perspective. www.uleth.ca/fas/nas

continued on page 21



SABTUAN CONTINUING EDUCATION *EDUCATION WITH A DIFFERENCE*

Did you know that over 1,000,000 people in the 15-64 age range do not have a high school diploma in Quebec? (MELS, 2005)

Did you know that the government of Quebec and the Ministry of Education has deemed this situation critical and has responded by implementing an Action Plan for Adult education and Continuing Education and Training? They stress the principle that not only is basic education a key factor in job maintenance and security and business performance but that insufficient education has consequences for both individuals and society in the short as well as the long term.

Did you know that basic education goes a long way in establishing better self-esteem, better job prospects and remuneration? Not to mention the value you add to your community and the encouragement you give to your children to better themselves through education?

Did you know that having a high school diploma opens the door to countless other education and training opportunities?

Did you know that high school credits are prerequisites for enrollment to vocational training programs?

FACT: Emploi-Quebec forecast for 2006-2010 anticipates an increase in workforce needs in 22 of the 33 activity sectors in Quebec (MELS, 2007). Some of the hottest and most in demand sectors are Mining, Construction, and Health Care and Social Assistance (Emploi-Quebec, 2008).

FACT: Between 2000-2001 and 2005-2006, total enrollments in vocational training rose by 18.6% (MELS, 2007)

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With a computer and a reliable internet connection, sharpen your writing or learning skills by taking such courses as Effective Writing and Preparing for College Success. Earn prerequisites to become eligible for cegep-level courses or vocational training programs.

FACT:

Sabtuhan Continuing Education provides a broad range of highly relevant educational and vocational training opportunities right within Eeyou Istchee and produces graduates who possess the practical skills necessary for a fulfilling career and future.

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- Vocational Training Programs
- Distance Education
- Short-term Courses (E.g. Cree, Computers, etc.)

TO MEET CURRENT DEMANDS FOR QUALIFIED LABOR IN THE MINING SECTOR,
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THE ORE EXTRACTION PROGRAM (930 HOURS) REGIONAL PROGRAM

The government of Quebec announced that the mineral sector has seen significant growth in Quebec and must meet the INDUSTRY'S GROWING NEED FOR QUALIFIED LABOR to prepare for the future of the mineral sector.

In three years, the value of Quebec mineral production has increased 33%, from \$3.6 billion to \$4.8 billion.

Over 40% of direct mining jobs in Quebec are located in the Cote-Nord, Abitibi-Temiscamingue, and the Nord-du-Quebec regions.

In our region, the Eleonore Project employs about 100 workers and 20% of jobs are filled by Crees under an agreement with the community of Wemindji. This project could lead to a \$450 million investment and create 450 jobs.

(Source: Gov't of Quebec, 2007)

PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF WILDLIFE HABITATS (MISTISSINI)

Program Start Date: TBD

Program length: 1320 hours

PREPARATORY TO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION (ONLINE)

Program Start Date: TBD

Program length: 285 hours

Contact your local Education Consultant or the Sabtuan Regional Vocational Training Centre for recent information on our courses and programs

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Tel. (819) 895-8852

Waskaganish & Eastmain

MARCEL MARTIN

Tel. (819) 753-2775

Waswanipi

MARJORIE FORSYTH

Tel. (819) 855-2230

Chisasibi & Whapmagoostui

ANNIE N. ISERHOFF

Tel. (418) 923-3347

Mistissini

RENE BLACKNED

Tel. (819) 978-3090

Wemindji

TBD

Tel. (418) 745-2383

Ouje-Bougoumou & Nemaska

MATTHEW ISERHOFF

Tel. (418) 923-2764

Regional Programs

SRTVC (Training Centre)

Tel. (819) 753-4040

Waswanipi

Sabtuan Continuing Education is committed to meeting the specific education and training needs of your community and welcomes the possibility of forming partnerships with local entities and organizations.

Please contact Charles Matoush, Director of Continuing Education,
at (418) 923-2764, ext 327 with your education and training proposals.





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Cree Regional Authority
Administration régionale Crie
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Grand Council of the Crees
(Eeyou Istchee)
Grand conseil des Crie
(Eeyou Istchee)



The Grand Council
of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)
congratulates the Cree School Board on
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in the communities.



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Information Tour in the Communities

Representatives from Hydro-Québec and SEBJ will soon be in your community to host an information session on the Eastmain-1-A/Sarcelle/Rupert project. You are cordially invited to come and find out more about the work and environmental studies that will be carried out in 2008.

The information sessions will be held at
7:00 p.m., on the dates at the locations below:

Nemaska	February 5, 2008
Mistissini	February 7, 2008
Waskaganish	February 12, 2008
Eastmain	February 14, 2008
Chisasibi	February 19, 2008
Wemindji	February 21, 2008

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
CONTACT YOUR LOCAL
REPRESENTATIVE.

EDWARD GILPIN
(Eastmain)
Phone: 819 977-0211

WILBERT SHECAPIO
(Mistissini)
Phone: 418 923-2856

LAWRENCE JIMIKEN
(Nemaska)
Phone: 819 673-2512

A. THOMAS HESTER
(Waskaganish)
Phone: 819 895-8650

ROBBIE TAPIATIC
(Chisasibi)
Phone: 819 855-3377

EMMETT GEORGEKISH
(Wemindji)
Phone: 819 978-0265

EASTMAIN-1-A/SARCELLE/RUPERT PROJECT



**Société d'énergie
de la Baie James**

What's special about special education?

By Nydia Nebelsky

Students with special needs – who are they? Can they still learn? Why do some of them have educators and some of them don't? Can people with special needs succeed in their communities?

It's easy to recognize the students who use a wheelchair or a walker, who are visually or hearing impaired, who have an intellectual challenge or have autism. Then there are the "invisible" challenges – learning disabilities, speech and communication disabilities, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, dyslexia, attention deficit disorder, and behaviour disorders.

A student is considered having a special need if he/she has been diagnosed by a pediatrician, psychologist, psychiatrist, speech and language pathologist, or occupational therapist, after a series of assessments and observations.

There are also students who can be considered "at risk" – they are experiencing difficulties, which may arise from poor attendance, family problems, bullying, or teaching methods which do not meet the student's learning style. These students also need our attention within our schools.

All students can learn. The degree to which they learn may differ depending on individual strengths and needs, but every student can learn. Teachers and schools may need to adjust their timetables or their environment or how they teach to meet these students' needs. Addressing these students' needs involves using a wide range of programming approaches, placements and supports.

Almost all students with special needs are included in the regular classroom. This is beneficial for everyone. Students learn from each other, but, more importantly, they grow with each other. Students who don't share school time with each other are often seen as different, not part of the group. Students who are isolated in school can be isolated in the general community. Inclusion promotes tolerance, acceptance, and understanding.

Why do some students have educators?

Educators are assigned after very careful consideration of the student's needs and a diagnosis. It must be determined that the student's need is such that support is required either some of the time, part of the time, or in a few cases, all of the time. Not all students with special needs need an educator. In fact, for some students, an educator can hamper independence.

The teacher is still responsible for planning, teaching and evaluating all the students in his/her classroom. The educator's role is to provide assistance in the classroom, sometimes with the student with special needs, and sometimes with other students in the classroom.

Special Education Services

Special Education Services was founded in 2004 because the board felt that students' needs would be best addressed by a department whose focus was providing resources and support. These resources can include formal academic or psychological evaluations or support provided by psychologists or consultants



Educators waiting for instructions from the Occupational Therapist

who specialize in autism, hearing or visual impairments.

Each school now has a special education department head, to provide continuing support and resources to teachers and educators of students with special needs and to assist in the referral process within the school, by providing alternative teaching methods, and alternative didactic material.

Each school also has been provided a psychoeducator, although most of the schools are still experiencing difficulties filling this position. This person provides continuing support for students with extreme behavioral or emotional difficulties, and they work closely with the psychologists who visit the schools.

Additional educator positions have been provided in each school to assist the teachers who have students whose diagnosis warrants the assistance of an educator, either some of the time, part of the time, or full time.

A second psychologist was hired by the Cree School Board this year, thereby providing more visits by psychologists to each school.

Each school has established a Local Problem Solving Committee (LPSC), consisting of the principal or vice-principal, the special education department head, psychoeducator (if there is one), and can also include the guidance counselor, school nurse, and SAT. Parents are always invited to attend LPSC meetings. Anyone can refer a student to the LPSC – even the parents.

A Special Education Advisory Group has been formed by the Cree School Board, the Cree Health Board and the Cree Regional Authority, to collaborate on services for students with special needs from daycare through secondary school. This ensures that the school is informed of the students' needs before school begins, can obtain assessments for students with special needs who are not yet school age, and make referrals to medical personnel when required.

There have been many changes in special education at the Cree School Board, and more to come. The goal of the Board, as always, is for every student to achieve his/her educational goals and to receive an education which supports their learning, their development and their cultural integrity.



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Meeting the needs of special-needs students

By Nydia Nebelsky

This year the Cree School Board implemented three new projects to help teachers support students with special needs and others experiencing difficulties in class.

New educators at our schools often lack the training they need to help special-needs students. For several years, the Cree School Board has benefited from an excellent relationship with Summit School, a school for students with developmental disabilities situated in Ville St. Laurent. This year, Special Education Services of the CSB approached the school's principal, Gloria Cherney, as well as their education consultant, Glenda Bernstein, to provide a special training program for Cree School Board educators.

The program, developed by Glenda Bernstein, provided the educators with an intensive week of training at Summit School. Working with the school's professionals and teachers, the educators learned how to assist the classroom teachers to whom they are assigned to help the students with special needs. Workshops on speech and language, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, music and behavior management gave the educators a good training base.

"Watching the confidence build in these educators as the week went on was remarkable," said Glenda Bernstein, who coordinated the program. "You could just feel the excitement grow as the educators developed new ideas, strategies and techniques."

This year, two groups (a total of 24 educators) spent a week at Summit School, one group in November, and the other group in January. It is planned to provide the training to more educators during the 2008 – 2009 school year

Training the teachers

This is the second year that the Cree School Board has contracted the services of the Montreal Fluency Centre, which visits schools in order to diagnose students experiencing speech and communication difficulties. They also provide intervention strategies teachers can use in the classroom.

This year, the Board arranged with the Montreal Fluency Centre to provide training for nine Cree teachers (one from each school) as "Cree Communication Aides." The nine teachers spent an intensive week in Montreal learning about language development, testing, story-telling and speech. Together the Cree teachers developed a speech sound test in Cree.

Using a distance model of contact, the Montreal Fluency Centre will continue keeping in touch with these teachers to provide them with support and to assist them in sharing the knowledge they have acquired with their colleagues.

Assessment Tools

This year, through the collaboration of Cree teachers, assessment tools have been developed to help teachers evaluate where students may be experiencing difficulties in Cree language and in math.



Discussing some of their classroom experiences



Being creative and having fun during the session on music

The Cree Assessment Package was developed for cycle one students in both Northern and Southern dialects by teachers Louisa George (Whapmagoostui), Frances Mark (Wemindji), Annie Gray (Ouje-Bougoumou), and Louise Cheechoo (Waswanipi), and by consultants Lucy Shem (Chisasibi) and Lillian Diamond (Nemaska).

Any teacher will be able to use this tool in class. The package is currently being field-tested in six communities (Whapmagoostui, Chisasibi, Wemindji, Waswanipi, Ouje-Bougoumou, and Nemaska).

Once the results are evaluated and adjustments made, copies will be made available to all schools through the special education department head. The department heads provide assistance and support to teachers and educators to assist in meeting the needs of students in either English or French.

This year a student checklist was also developed for Cree cycle one teachers to use when they are concerned about a student's language development. It will help the teacher intervene earlier when students are having difficulties in speech and communication.

Special Education Services at the Cree School Board is continuing to work on projects to provide teachers with tools to assist them in helping to find ways to meet their students' needs, so that all students can receive the best possible education.

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youth."*



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The Union

Other universities in Canada that also offer various types of Native or Indigenous peoples studies are as follows:

Cape Breton University in Nova Scotia offers a unique Mi'kmaq Studies program featuring both a major and minor in Mi'kmaq Studies and various other programs with a focus on the Mi'kmaq people. <http://mrc.uccb.ns.ca/courses.html>

The **University of Northern British Columbia** offers a First Nations Studies program with BA and MA programs and certificates in both Aboriginal Health Sciences and First Nations Language. www.unbc.ca/firstnations/

The **University of Toronto** has offered a Native Studies Program where students can graduate with a BA specialist, major and minor. Their focus is on the languages, cultures, histories, creativity and wellbeing of the indigenous peoples in Canada and globally. www.utoronto.ca/abs

Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario, offers a BA, an MA, and a Ph.D. program in Native Studies along with programs in Native Management and Economic Development, and Indigenous Environmental Studies.

www.trentu.ca/academic/nativestudies

McMaster University in Hamilton offers an Indigenous Studies program where students can graduate from a three-year combined BA in Indigenous Studies in conjunction with another subject or obtain a BA, MA or Ph.D. www.mcmaster.ca/indigenous/default.htm

Lastly, the **University of Victoria** offers a variety of interesting programs, including a Certificate in the Administration of Indigenous Governments and an MA program in the same field. <http://web.uvic.ca>

letters

Letter to the Editor

Like many other Crees, I usually read the latest *Nation* with interest but I was very disappointed in the reporting on the recent tragedies in the community of Mistissini because of the way in which much of the information the writer, Steve Bonspiel, quoted in the article were misinterpreted. I feel that Mr. Bonspiel even relied on his own assumptions to compensate for the information I was not at liberty to share in my role as a Police Officer.

Out of concern and respect for the family of the victims who have to relive the tragedies in print, I would like to clarify. First of all, in the case of Gary Shecapio, Mr. Bonspiel reports that the event occurred the "next morning". In fact, it also occurred on January 1, 2008. More importantly is that, though the death resulted from asphyxiation, it was not due to "a massive house fire". No such event occurred in Mistissini on New Year's Day. Also, Gary Shecapio was actually 28 years old. Having explained to Mr. Bonspiel that the case was being investigated by the Sûreté du Québec, I then told him to contact them directly for the conclusion.

On the other hand, I would like to point out the impact that this type of reporting can have not only for the families but the policing community as well. It puts our own credibility and professionalism into question. As Police Officers, we have to remain objective and deal with the facts.

For the future, it would be to the benefit of all parties to double-check the facts before they are printed.

Thank you,

Derek Etapp St-Cyr

Mistissini Police Officer/Investigator

Education in crisis

The headline on your title page should have read, "A Nation in Crisis" instead of the focus being on Education. Many of the problems brought to light in this community are mirrored in all the Cree communities. While there are many social issues in the schools many of the problems do not originate in these institutions. They are transferred over from the community and left with the school administrations to deal with. This is an unfair burden on them and the Cree School Board as a whole. I have also been with the CSB since 1978 and I whole heartedly agree with Gordon Blackned's position on language. Your language enforces your national identity and gives reinforcement to your individuality, who you are. The moral fabric of Cree society is embedded in your language, just listen to the stories of the Elders and you will realize. I have heard debates and opinions on Cree as a language of instruction in the schools. Language begins at home and should be re-inforced in your institutions, you are a Cree Nation for God's sake! Why should this even be a debate? What kind of message are you sending to your young people with this type of dialogue? It must be confusing to them when the adults can't decide who they are? We have to teach children concepts of learning before we start introducing them to a second language. As has been pointed out they are already being bombarded by a second language through the media anyway. If I were to analyse the information on the success rate of the cohorts that were mentioned, I would say that we now have a generation of parents that are incapable of assisting their children in their school work. This has a snowball effect and the problem will perpetuate itself should these parents decide not to get upgraded through Sabtuan Continuing Education or any other means available to them. Their children will have a higher chance of dropping out. The Cree communities are presently going through the effects of modern day colonialism, you are now stressing independence where in the past it was co-dependance that ensured your survival. While your challenges accumulate, you also have the means to meet these challenges. You are more fortunate than most First Nations people in Canada.

Thank You

Gerard V. Bear



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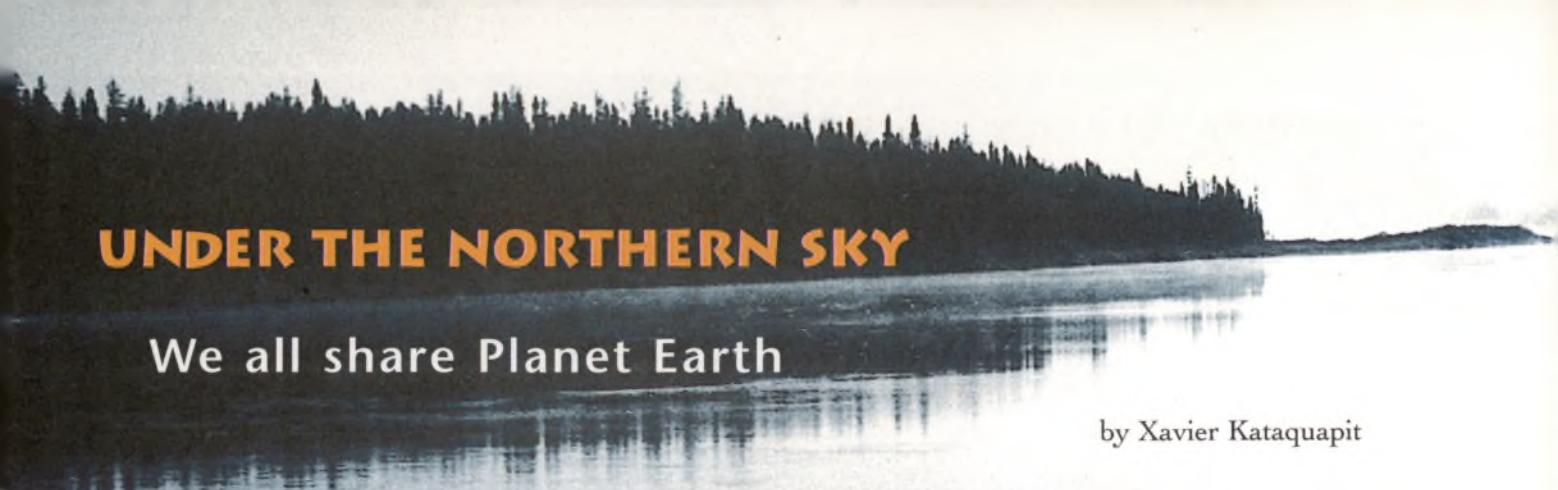
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UNDER THE NORTHERN SKY

We all share Planet Earth

by Xavier Kataquapit

Television is our window into the greater world. It is a view of our planet that we may never get to see in person during our lifetime, showing us places we may have read about or heard of from other people.

I remember sitting at home in Attawapiskat in the evenings and relaxing in front of the television with my brothers. We watched any old program. We didn't have much choice and we ended up viewing news programs, TV sitcoms and even black and white film classics. The most exciting time around the TV had to do with wildlife documentaries.

I suppose it was our close connection to the land that captivated us as we watched documentaries of all types about animals on the land, from closer to home in Canada and from far-away places that were foreign to us.

Mom and dad enjoyed these shows, especially when they featured familiar creatures and animals from along the James Bay coast. Although they had many experiences with animals and birds on the land many animals remained elusive to them. In many cases they had stories of coming upon scenes of rare animals where evidence had been left of a hunt and kill or bedding overnight.

However, in real life they never got the chance to see a migration of geese from the air, a close-up of a hunting polar bear wandering on the ice floes, or the daily lives of the tiniest creatures that live on the land. It must have been a surprising realization to watch the world they grew up in from a new point of view from the comfort and warmth of their own home.

We were also amazed at the great variety of animals and creatures that we learned about on TV. Some were familiar like the geese that migrate between Europe and northern Africa. They have different markings or make different sounds but they still look like the geese we see in the north every spring. The same went for ducks, cranes and crows from other parts of the world. Even land animals like hyenas, jackals and wild dogs were closely related to wolves and foxes. We recognized big cats like leopards, lions and tigers as being similar to lynx, bob cats and cougars from our part of the world.

However, we were mesmerized by the lumbering elephant, tall giraffes, alligators, crocodiles, penguins, monkeys and baboons, all the great fish, dolphins and whales of the ocean and everything in between. Much of the time we were very thankful the more dangerous ones were not nearby.

As children we learned about the different animals of the planet from our studies in school. But our parents had little education so it must have been quite the shock to have been introduced to all the varieties of animals across the globe. I have witnessed my mom and dad glued to the TV in awe of multicoloured birds of paradise from the Pacific, strange lizards and animals from Australia, wildebeest and zebra from Africa and tigers and pandas from Asia.

Even today if a wildlife program pops up on the TV, my parents put everything aside to view the animals, birds and sea creatures. They don't understand all of the narration in English but it really does not matter much because they are watching more as hunters and gatherers. They understand very well what is going on in the animal kingdom of survival on the land.

I still enjoy watching nature documentaries. At Christmas I got a great gift of a multi-DVD collection called Planet Earth, a BBC documentary series that highlights every part of the globe, from the deep oceans, dry deserts, jungles, mountain terrain and the frozen lands at either pole. It exposes many different parts of our world in great detail and shows the familiar sights and sounds of our northland, as well as rare images of animals and creatures that are on the brink of extinction.

After viewing any part of this remarkable series I feel a great sense of our awareness of the planet Earth. It puts me in touch with just how fragile our planet is. It also makes me realize how we are impacting the rainforests, ice fields and water bodies. It reminds me how we are connected to everything on this planet no matter what the distance.

I just hope that this brilliant series drives us all to realize that we have a wonderful home planet to protect for future generations. It is my great fear that it might end up as an historical documentary of how things were. The choice is ours.

CLASSIFIEDS

BIRTHS

I wanna say Congratulations! to my cousins, Anita Kitty & her husband Bradley on the birth of their daughter Anna Faith Brenda Amanda on December 14, 2007, to Lori Jolly & her boyfriend Matthew on the birth of their son on January 14, 2008, Brendan Terrell Rylan and to Chantal Jolly and her boyfriend Samuel on their birth of their daughter on January 17, 2008, Dinah Delores Kimberly. Congratulations my cousins, take care

of your little ones and have joyous times with them and love them always! Children are a blessing from God above. Nii Tricia xoxoxox.

BIRTHDAYS

I would like to wish a happy birthday to these people: my Uncle Patrick Sealhunter on Feb.15.08, Jordon House-Sealhunter on Feb.28.08, my Aunt/Godmother Alexandra (jan-jou) Matthew on March 12, 08, my Uncle Kevin Sealhunter on March 15, 08, my Uncle/Godfather Ronnie

Sealhunter on March 23, 08, and my Googum Diane Matthew on March 26,08, and many more birthdays to come...I love you all..from ur nephew/bro/godchild/grandson.....Rondell Matthew-Sealhunter.

We want to wish a very special little person a happy 1st birthday. On January 14 Miss Jacklene Allenna Daphne Diamond celebrated her first birthday anjabweh our baby you're one ash... lob you berry berry much. Hugs n' kisses, Mom, Dad, Crystal and Chris.

Important Notice to Employers

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Canada Summer Jobs is an initiative of the Summer Work Experience program. It provides funding for not-for-profit organizations, public-sector employers, and small businesses with 50 or fewer employees to create work experiences for students between the ages of 15 and 30.

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Applications can be submitted online, by mail, by fax, or in person at any Service Canada Centre.

For more information:

Call 1-800-935-5555 (TTY: 1-800-926-9105)

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CLASSIFIEDS

Just wanted to wish a happy belated 18th birthday to my nephew Bobby Freddie Capassisit, and many more to come....Love: ur Auntie and Jimmy.

A special Birthday greeting goes out to our special, cute, and sweet daughter/sister Edith Suzanna Wapachee. She will be celebrating her 5th Birthday on February 11/08. Hope you enjoy yourself on your special day. And don't eat too much cake or else you might get an upset stomach by the end of the day. Once again...HAPPY 5th BIRTHDAY!!! Love always, Mom, Dad, Natacha, Neil, Brandy, Melanie and Caitlyn.

We would like the Cree Nation to know that Samuel Hughboy from Wemindji will be celebrating his 92nd Birthday on January 14th. We the Children, Grandchildren and the Great- grandchildren want to wish him a HAPPY BIRTHDAY!! and many more to come and we love you very much!

Wishing a very special person in our lives a Happy Birthday on Feb 3rd, my mother, Doreen Shashaweskum. We hope you enjoy your day and many, many more to come. With love, Sabrina, Faith & Isaac...Also to Alyssa Coonishish from Mistissini, who will be celebrating her birthday on the same day...Happy Birthday Alyssa!!

Happy Birthday to Clayton Blueboy on January 7th. Sorry I couldn't be there to celebrate with you. We'll double the fun for next year! Ciao! Ernest.

A Special Birthday Wish goes out to my handsome Son, Casey Lee Mianscum on January 25th, 2008. Happy Birthday to my big boy, twenty-four years is a long time to love someone, eh? Don't worry a Mother's Love never ends. I Love You and God Bless your day! From a Mother who adores you, Sue and your three Siblings at 104 Obatagamau. O-jay... XXXXOOOO

My Darling Daughter will be celebrating her 19th Birthday on January 30th, 2008. Wow, how times flies, born at 4:10 A.M. in Chibougamau. I appreciate all that you are today and always will. God bless your birthday and keep smiling because I Love your dimples. Don't forget who you inherited them from, eh? L.O.L. Love your Mother, Sue & your brothers, Casey, Johnny and Baby Jacob. XXXXOOOO

Wanting to wish our beautiful daughters Happy Birthday, one on January 22 Mrs. Louise I. Hester and Sherrie Iserhoff on January 29. May you enjoy your given days. Always remember that we love you both, Fr. Mom and Dad (Alice & Francois)

Happy 1st Birthday to my twin nieces Amanda and Kayla Shecapio in Gatineau, Quebec on January 30, 2008. Wow! It's already been a year since these two little angels came into this world and into our lives. May God Bless you with many birthdays. You bring joy and laughter in our lives. Love Auntie Maggie, Uncle Charlie and your cousins Nikita and Chelsea Loon in Mississini.

Happy 5th Birthday to Mary Eve's Blacksmith on Feb.10. Have fun on your birthday! Don't forget to put on your makeup!...lol...XOXOX...From all of us in Val-d'Or, Cheyanne, Diane & Balou.

I would like to wish a Happy belated Birthday to my big brother Lindy Tyrone Trapper. Hope, your day was special as you are. Once again, Happy Belated Birthday Lindy, hope to see you soon. One more year till 8teen, yr getting there. Love: your first little sister. L-Earlis.

I'd like to say happy birthday to my brother Terry Jamie Bosum he turned 24 on January 20. Happy

Birthday, Bro! I mean happy belated birthday!! Don't party too much. I love you and I miss you so much. Hope I get to see you some time...anyways take care, love your sista!! Trista Bosum.

Happy Birthday to my beautiful neice Brooklyn
Amber Maggies, I love you, and my Auntie
Francis Couchees, love you too. Wish you the best
and a wonderful day, too. From Olivia Couchees
(Ojay) oxoxoxoxo.

CONGRATULATIONS

National Child Benefit Strategy would like to thank the generous people, businesses & entities for the donations over the holiday for our Christmas hampers: Waswanipi Grocery Store, Karens Videos, Epicerie Desmaraville, Ben Deshaie Grossist, Awashishikungamik Child Day Care, Bar Ti-Cossin Desmaraville, Waswanipi Band, Caroline Happyjack, Betsy Happyjack, Bianca Albert, Mistee Meegwetch!! Delivery by National Child Benefit Staff & Fire Hall. I am taking the opportunity to give thanks to my colleagues for their great work & involvement with the children in our meal programs. Caroline & Betsy are up & about making breakfast for the school age children at 7 am. Their devotion to our Angels is remarkable. It brings warmth to my heart to know that their efforts & cooking skills are on our team for the children. I truly appreciate working with you two. And I know the children love the time you take for each of them when their road gets bumpy. Thank you!! Bianca Albert NCBS coordinator.

Congratulations to Timmy Herodier and Miranda Otter on the arrival of their daughter, Letisha Harmony Pearl Otter Herodier, born Jan. 2, 2008, 8.5 lbs, 7:22 am. Take care of her, she needs you, and we will be there for her also, for she is a gift to all of us! We love her so much, never forget to tell her that every day! Love u's too. Christopher

Congratulations to our hockey team famously known as the Nemaska "Axemen". As they always say hard work pays off and what you achieved after being down 3-0 shows big character. After sending the game into overtime bringing the fans to their feet with the tying goal and then emerging victorious with a 4-3 win, it is a game our fans and the community of Mistissini will always remember and I for one definitely will never forget that game. One more thing to our biggest fan Kenny Jolly sr. I am glad we made that trip worth it for you and thank you to all our loyal fans of Nemaska that supported us throughout the week-end playing the game we love. JWB #5

IN MEMORIUM

To our dear late: mother, grandmother to our kids, Evadney Mianscum Bosum, wife of Jean-Pierre Bosum (Sam.J.P). Just wanted to say that we really miss you so much, we never thought that you were gonna leave us so soon without saying goodbye. It was so hard letting you go, but we know that we have to learn to get on with our lives without you. Our mother went home to be with her Lord & Saviour and her loved ones on November 12, 2007, in a Montreal hospital. She was only 60 years old. We are gonna miss you so much, Mom. We love you Mom, Gookum. From your kids: Jimmy James, D-jay Albert, Mario, Alice, Christine; Grandchildren: Isaiah, Charlie, Saabiel, Alexander, Catherine, Isaac, Beulla, Minnie, Alison. Sherman.

In loving memory of my birth mother Alice Kitchen Jonah, August 8, 1934 - December 18, 2007. I found this poem and dedicate this to her. God looked around his garden and he found an empty place. And then he

looked down upon Earth and saw your tired face. He put his arms around you and lifted you to rest. God's garden must be beautiful, He always takes the best. He knew you were suffering, He knew you were in pain. He knew that you would never get well on earth again. He saw the road was getting rough, and the hills were hard to climb. So He closed your weary eyelids and whispered "peace be thine." It broke our hearts to lose you. But you didn't go alone, for part of us went with you, the day God called you home. I was not raised by my mother. I never thought I would go through such pain of losing her. At her funeral my eyes opened to how selfish I'd been all these years. I was angry for being the one adopted. That day I realized that she sacrificed me, her child, and thought of how she must of felt of not having one of her children in her family. I need to forgive myself and to truly forgive my dear mother for her unconditional love. With love, your daughter Judy Capissist.

PERSONAL MESSAGES

All my life I prayed for someone like you and I think I just got my prayer answered. I went Christmas hunting this year for that someone and I did get my game,...I found you. You were something when I first heard your voice. I said to my self ..wow!! I think this is him. I know we only met once, like a few years back, but I never thought it would be you. I just wanted to tell you that I really, really, like you and just wish to be with you some day. Hope you feel the same way about me.....take care.I know, you know me. Xoxoxox

Hello to all my Cree friends. Hi! I just wanted to say hello to all whom may remember me from my Fort George days back in the '70's, when I lived there with my mother, Gerda Hansen. I must say they were the good days. I still have a few close friends from the north, but have lost contact with lots. I now live here in Kahnawake. I have 3 lovely grown children and 2 delightful grand-daughters. I would like it if one of these summers my husband and I could drive up to Chisasibi for a visit. If there is any one who would like to e-mail me, you could at eelwolfear@aol.com. Elaine Wolfear-Cross.

I would like to say a big hello to my friend. Her name is Melanie Gunner. It's been a while that I didn't see or heard from her. The last time I saw you was in Chibougamau. And also I wanted to wish her Happy New Year. Hope everything goes well in your life. So Melanie if you see this ad...please write to me you know my address. Take care of your kids and yourself, my friend. Hope to see you somewhere. Love in friendship; Nii Nat (Nem).

Happy Valentines day to Larry David Salt Jr. I love you babe. Can't wait to be with you again. You're very important in my life and oh yeah, I love you so much. From your Olivia Couchees. 0x0x0x0x0x0x0x0x0x0x0 lots of love 0x.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Native Women's Shelter of Montreal has a 1-800 number. You can now reach us toll-free at: 1-866-403-4688. Please check out our website at: www.nwsm.info and feel free to give us any feedback. Do you need help? Someone to talk to? Call Kid's Help Phone's toll-free at: 1-800-668-6868, or visit: www.kidshelp.svmpatico.ca.

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